



February 27, 2015

Dear Chairman Shirkey:

On behalf of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), I urge you to support Senate Bill 68 that provides licensure and a defined scope of practice for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs). This legislation will help to increase access to high-quality health care for Michigan residents. AACN represents over 760 schools of nursing nationwide that educate approximately 425,000 students and employ over 17,000 faculty members. Within the state of Michigan, approximately 1,500 students are currently studying to become graduate-prepared APRNs, including 1,310 Certified Nurse Practitioners (CNP), 60 Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs), and 96 Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs).

By passing SB 68, CNPs, CNMs, and CNSs would be able to practice to the full extent of their education and training after a four-year mentorship period with a physician or another independent prescriber. Specifically, new provisions in SB 68 create the APRN Health Resources Shortage Area Fund, which will expand care provided by APRNs into the 507 communities of Michigan designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas. These self-sustained funds, which come from APRN licensure fees, will provide grants to APRNs willing to work and provide care to residents of rural and urban underserved communities in Michigan.

AACN's member institutions prepare APRN students with the expertise necessary to meet the nation's primary and acute care needs. Since these providers must pass a national certification examination to demonstrate their knowledge and competency, and maintain these credentials through continued educational development, APRNs are well-qualified to practice in their roles. Additionally, they are recognized as an essential part of a patient's healthcare team. Evidence-based research shows APRNs attribute to healthcare cost savings, increase access to high-quality care, and have high patient satisfaction ratings. Other leading authorities agree that APRNs should be able to practice to the full extent of their education and training, such as the National Governors Association, AARP, and most notably, the Institute of Medicine (IOM). Further, rulings by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) call for state legislatures to adopt less restrictive regulatory models that permit APRNs to practice without unnecessary physician supervision.

AACN believes that Senate Bill 68 would be congruent with the positions of the IOM and FTC as well as state trends to impose fewer restrictions on scope of practice. This legislation will not change the established practice of consultation with physicians or referral to specialty physicians for patients with more complex issues or whose care is outside of APRN scope of practice. It could however, help Michigan remain a competitive environment for healthcare providers and ensure positive outcomes for patients. I urge you to support Senate Bill 68. If you have any questions or require further information, please contact AACN's Senior Director of Government Affairs and Health Policy, Dr. Suzanne Miyamoto at smiyamoto@aacn.nche.edu or 202-463-6930, ext. 247.

Sincerely,

Eileen T. Breslin, PhD, RN, FAAN
President

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